

Learning The Hard Way

An excerpt from Padme Nina Livingstone's *Let's Not Call It Meditation: Practical Guidance for People Who Think They Can't Sit Still and Quiet the Mind*

A while ago, our son, Jason, turned seventeen. Two days after his birthday, Jason went to a concert and accepted a couple of alcoholic drinks. After the concert, he and his friends got into his car and headed home. On the way, a police officer noticed the brake light was out and pulled them over. Jason failed the sobriety tests. He was arrested and taken to the police station in handcuffs.

Jason had to deal with the consequences; a possible DWI, and the court system. He lost his driving privileges. He also lost his chance to play in sectional soccer games for his high school. Obviously, he was not using good discretion that night. It was a blessing no one was hurt.

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no one was hurt.”***

The day after his arrest, Jason said to me, “I guess I wasn’t ready to drive.” Jason wanted me to use his story in this book. He planned to join a school club called SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions), and hoped to help others make smart decisions. His ability to use discretion the next time improved with his experience and understanding.

Jason is learning discretion. As well as having the Intention to not hurt others, we also need to use our mental abilities too. We need to remember that drinking and driving is extremely dangerous for everybody. Then, we can think before we act. We can say, “No thank you” when offered alcohol and want to drive. We can also say, “No thank you” to drugs or other experiences, which can be self-destructive, or harmful to others.

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What was our reaction to the whole mess Jason created? Naturally, we were concerned about the possibility of him having hurt someone or himself because of his lack of discretion, yet we listened to his story with Awareness, without blame and anger. On reflection, we realized that our years of meditation came to good use. We noticed what needed to be done: take away driving privileges, call the school athletic director, and call a lawyer.

My Awareness practice was especially useful the week before we went to court. I was caught up in fear over not having any control over what the courts might do to Jason. As I let myself get carried away, I felt upset and afraid for my son. The body reacted from my fears, and I developed an upset stomach, headaches, and nausea. Paying attention to my feelings, I remembered the practice of Wanting Nothing



About Padme Livingstone

Padme Nina Livingstone is the Director of A Quieter Place: Practical Meditation for Living Your Life. She has a B.S. in Human Services and extensive experience with awareness meditation, self-inquiry, parenting, relationship skills, energy work, caregiving, and bereavement. As a meditation teacher and author, Padme has spent much of her life untangling her own confusion, while finding balance around her physical, mental, emotional and spiritual life. After more than 36 years of meditation and self-inquiry, and over 18 years of energy healing work, Padme discusses meditation, relationships, and energy healing using accessible, practical language with people who want to feel less stress, and enjoy more peace, clarity, compassion, curiosity, honesty, and gratitude. For more information, visit her website at www.aquieterplace.com